

**Pebble Cottage, Milestone Avenue,
Charvil, Berkshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr Andrew Pearson

by Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code PCC 03/15

March 2003

Summary

Site name: Pebble Cottage, Milestone Avenue, Charvil, Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 7706 7633

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 3rd-4th March 2003

Project manager: Jo Pine

Site supervisor: Andy Taylor

Site code: PCC 03/15

Area of site: c.20sq m

Summary of results: No archaeological deposits or finds were observed.

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd, 47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, RG1 5NR, and will be deposited with Reading Museum in due course.

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Pebble Cottage, Milestone Avenue, Charvil, Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

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Report 03/15

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Pebble Cottage, Milestone Avenue, Charvil, Berkshire (SU 7706 7633) (Figs 1 and 2). The work was commissioned by Mr Andrew Pearson, 20 Park View Drive South, Charvil, Berkshire, RG10 9QX.

Planning permission (F/2002/7892) has been granted by Wokingham District Council to construct a two-storey extension to the existing house subject to a condition relating to archaeology, which requires a watching brief to be carried out during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the District policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Kev Beachus, Senior Archaeologist with Babbie, archaeological advisers to the Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy Taylor between 3rd and 4th of March 2003 and the site code is PCC 03/15. The archive is presently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd, 47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, RG1 5NR and will be deposited with Reading Museum in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on a plot of land at the north-eastern end of Milestone Avenue, Charvil. It lies to the north of the A4 on the very edge of Charvil itself, and lies at a height of c.40m above Ordnance Datum. The area of development covered parts of the driveway and back garden. The underlying geology is plateau gravel (BGS 1971), which was observed throughout the foundation trenches.

Archaeological background

The potential of the site derives from its position within the Thames Valley in an area rich in archaeological deposits visible from the air (Gates 1975; Slade 1964) and with further evidence also gained from field survey (Ford 1997). The cropmarks include Neolithic ritual monuments (a *cursus* and a mortuary enclosure), Bronze Age ring ditches (levelled round barrows) and Roman enclosures. Part of the area has been designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM180)

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to:

- a) Observe and record all archaeological deposits within areas of ground disturbance associated with the groundworks.
- b) Excavate and record any archaeological deposits which would be damaged or disturbed during the groundworks.
- c) Produce, where possible, relative and absolute dating for the features on the site.
- d) Provide, if possible, information on the economy and the local environment on the site.
- e) Establish the character of the deposits, in order to define functional areas of the site, such as industrial, domestic etc., and produce a settlement history of the site.

The methodology consisted of the removal of topsoil followed by the excavation of foundation trenches by machine.

Results

Two small areas of land, each measuring approximately 9.50sq m, were stripped of overburden before the foundation trenches were dug. This material consisted of shingle of the current driveway. The footings formed the basis of a two-storey extension on the southern side of Pebble Cottage (Fig. 3). These measured 0.65m wide and were dug to a total depth of 1.00m. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.15m of shingle overlying 0.45m of mid brown silty clay subsoil overlying gravel natural. The measurements and stratigraphy were consistent in both areas of the extension.

No archaeological deposits or finds were observed in either area.

Finds

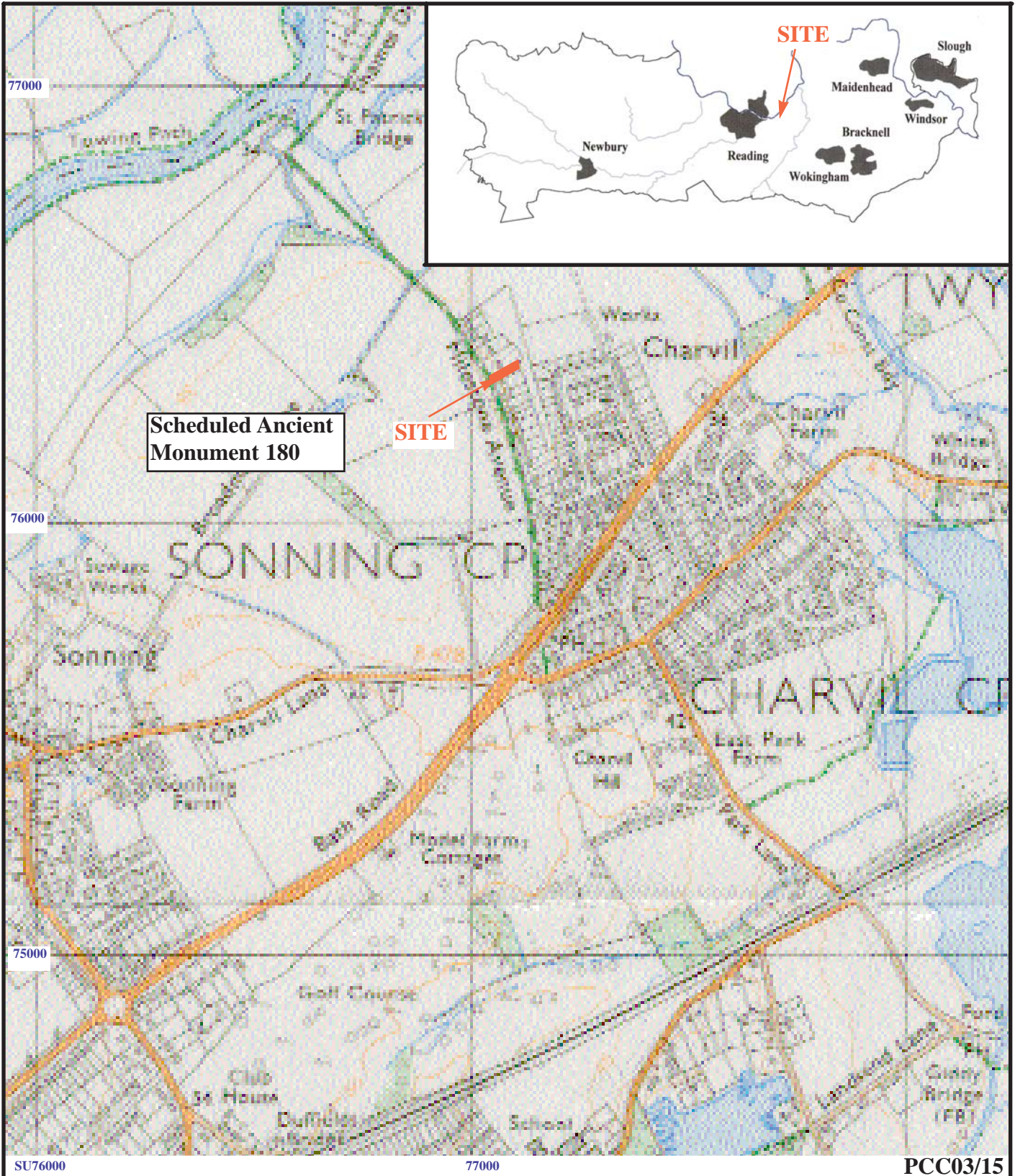
No archaeological finds were recovered.

Conclusion

No deposits or finds of an archaeological nature were observed in either area of the watching brief.

References

- BGS, 1971, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 268, Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Gates, T, 1975, *The Middle Thames Valley, an archaeological survey of the river gravels*. Berkshire Archaeol Comm publ n 1, Reading
- Ford, S, 1997, 'The Loddon Valley (Berkshire) fieldwalking survey', *Berkshire Archaeol J* **75**, (for 1994–7), 11–34
- PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO
- Slade, C F, 1964, 'A late Neolithic enclosure at Sonning, Berkshire', *Berkshire Archaeol J* **61**, 4–19



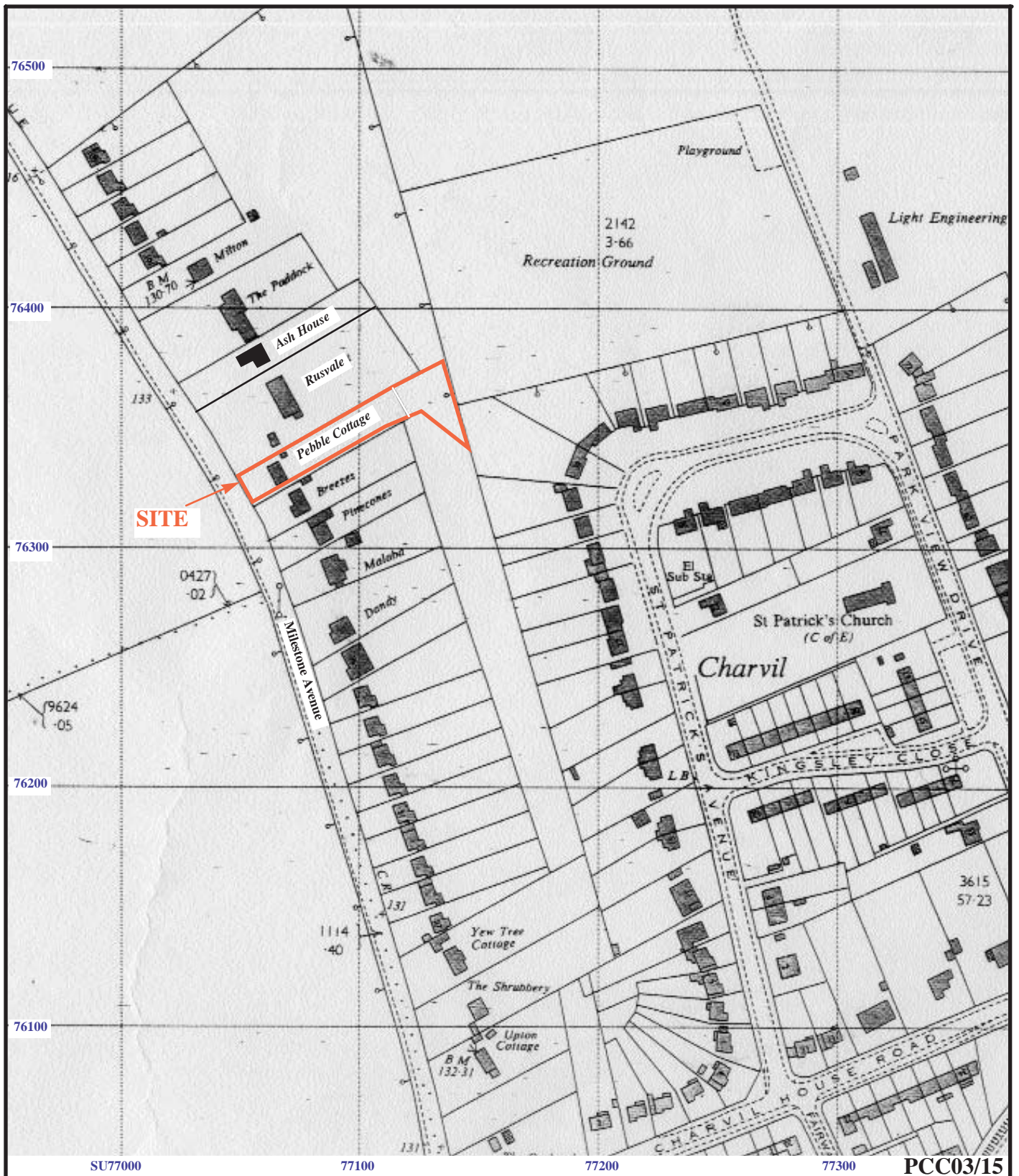
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Figure 1. Location of site within Charvil and Berkshire.

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Figure 2. Location of site within Charvil.

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Foundations Observed



Figure 3: Foundation Plan